THE DAUGHTER.

It's not meself I'm grieving for, it's not that I'm complaining
For he's a good man, is Michael, and I've never felt his frown),
But there's sorrow beating on me like a long day's raining
On the little wrinkled face of her I left in Kerrydown.

It's just Herself I'm longing for, Herself and no other—
Do you mind the morns we walked to Mass when all the fields were green?—
'Twas I that pinned your kerchief, oh, me mother, mother, mother,
The wide seas, the cruel seas and half the world between!

It's the man's part to say the word, the wife's to up and follow
(It's a fair land we've come to, and there's plenty here for all);
It's not the homesick longing that lurks me like a swallow,
But the one voice across the world that draws me to its call.

It's just Herself I'm longing for, Herself and no other,
Do you mind the tales you told me when the turf was blazing bright?—
Me head upon your shoulder, oh, me mother, mother, mother,
The broad seas between us and yourself alone tonight!

There's decent neighbors all about, there's coming and there's going;
It's kind souls will be about me when the little one is here;
But it's her word that I'm wanting, her comfort I'd be knowing,
And her blessing on the two of us to drive away the fear.

It's just Herself I'm longing for, Herself and no other,
Do you mind the soft spring mornings when you stitched the wedding gown?—
The little, careful stitches, oh, me mother, mother, mother,
Meself beyond the broad seas and you in Kerrydown!

—Theodosia Garrison, in McClure's Magazine.

The Harp of Life.

By

L. LOVEGROVE.

"Where's Nan?"

That was the usual cry at the Coverdale's if the eldest daughter disappeared for more than five minutes. The vicar needed her to write for him; the sweet-faced mother missed her girl's affectionate care; and one or another of the five boys and girls were sure to want the help which only Nan could give.

It was sweet to feel herself the prop of the household, to know that she was necessary to them all, from the grave, tender father down to wee Flo, the pet of the family; yet, brave lifter of burdens as she was, Nan sometimes felt the strain of it all, and felt, also, that it would be good at times to be a "leaner" if—ah! if—

"Where's Nan?" again demanded Fred. His kite wanted mending and he was eager to be off, for the wind was glorious and the boys were waiting for him.

"She has gone for a run down to auntie's," said Mrs. Coverdale, from the couch where so much of her life was spent.

Fred grumblingly departed. It was a query if he would find another willing helper. Then the vicar looked up from his book to say, "My dear, I am glad Nan is out of the way for once, for I'm afraid between us we demand too much of her." The mother sighed as she agreed with him, for her own helplessness troubled her greatly.

He heard the sigh, and love interpreted its meaning for him, for theirs were love-linked hearts. In the talk which followed the mother heart was comforted, for she was made to feel how great a place she held in the lives of all the family, and, most of all, how precious she was to this, her husband.

Meanwhile, could they have seen Annie, how amazed they would have been.

Swiftly walking along the country road, ignoring its loneliness, and heedless of the gathering gloom, she was fighting a lonely heart battle.

Nan felt herself a woman. Her place in the household had developed womanliness in her, but not until lately had the chord of love been touched on the harp of her life; only lately had she realized how gradually (and unconsciously to herself) she had grown to revel in the presence of Douglas Gray.

He was her father's curate, for the parish was a large one. She liked to talk over her favorite books with him; to discuss the intricacies of meaning in her favorite poems; most of all his earnest, vivid preaching touched her, and to be linked to such a personality would, she felt, mean living on high levels indeed.

But during the last few weeks she had unwillingly begun to think that while he gave to herself a warm friendship, he was yielding the love she coveted to her sister Amy.

Bright-faced Amy had that intangible, unexplainable grace of pleasing, which takes a man unawares, but holds him firmly.

Watching the two that afternoon the truth had cut its way into Nan's heart. Sitting sewing near the window—Nan had no leisure for the pretty fancy work of which Amy was so fond—she had caught snatches of their conversation, as Amy and Douglas wandered in the old-fashioned garden, to them so evidently a garden of Eden. By-and-by Amy had bent over to cut a rose, and the watchful eyes at the window had noted the ardent expression of love on the man's face as he stood watching. It only needed that Nan should, after the curate's departure, happen upon her sister seated under one of the old garden trees—lost in a happy day dream. The disillusionment was complete.

And now face to face with her trouble, and how she despised herself (yet why should she?) because it was a trouble! She was trying with measured tramp to beat down the pain in her heart. She had given her love unsought, and self-contempt raged in her heart for the jealous feelings which would arise against her much-loved sister. Above all rose the dread of self-betrayal! If she remained at home that might come at any moment.

"I must go away," she said it half aloud in her earnestness. "I can see so well what is coming, and I cannot stay to see it through."

And then the thought of her mother, and of how unfitted she was to meet the cares of the household, swept like an overwhelming wave over her troubled heart.

"Oh, I can't go, and yet I must! I must! I never have left them; they must manage without me," she thought, and still the battle raged.

Finding physical energy at last giving out, she retraced her steps, and wearied in body and mind found her way to her aunt's, where all this time she had been supposed to be. She seemed too tired and spent to make up her mind to anything, but as she stepped into the cosy room a sense of rest stole into her weary heart.

This was the "home," using that sweet word in its truest sense, of her father's maiden sister Aunt Dorothea gave one look at the girl's white weary face, then her arms went out, and in a moment later, like an overspent child in the arms of its mother, Nan rested there until soothed and comforted by deep, unspoken sympathy, she sank on to a footstool at her aunt's feet, feeling that the tension was relieved, and her burden already lightened.

And there, in the firelight, she unburdened her heart, and told that which but an hour before she had only resolved should never meet the ear of any human soul. Such is the potency of sympathy. The words of that conversation need not be recorded. Words are important, but in those rare heart-to-heart talks of which life gives so few, that which matters most is the love-lit eye, the tender tone, and the sacred unveiling of the recesses of human hearts. At such times "spirit with spirit can meet," and only then do we realize how closely two human souls can touch, and how deep and far-reaching is the influence of one personality on another.

Dorothea Coverdale was a living exposition of Lowell's beautiful words:

Be noble;
And the nobleness which lies in others sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own.

Quietly there, in that cosy room, which somehow seemed the natural environment of the pure soul who inhabited it, Aunt Dorothea, in her turn, told the romance of her own girlhood's days. It was a story before which Nan's little tale dwindled into insignificance, and yet the woman who had suffered such terrible heart-ache, somehow managed to convey to the listening girl the sense that all her feelings were understood, and the bitterness not one jot underestimated.

"Yes, dear, I am not afraid to let you know that I think the bestowal of a good man's love brings to a true woman the highest and purest of earthly happiness. I believe that without tha gift, a woman's life is, and must be, incomplete, for the grand range of feelings which come to a wife and mother cannot be hers, and, therefore, one side of her nature must ever go hungry; but," and the words which followed left Nan feeling that the Highest still remained for her, and the message, "I am among you as He that serveth" took on a new meaning. The dear home life she saw in a new light, and the home love seemed worthy of any sacrifice.

As she walked home she thought of Longfellow's "Legend Beautiful," and entered the house with the words ringing her ears:

Do thy duty, that is best;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest.

and life was invested with a new meaning.

It was well that Nan was fortified, for even as she had foreseen, it came to pass. She had to run the gauntlet of all that she had dreaded.

"Nan," said Mrs. Coversdale, one afternoon as they sat alone, "do you know what Douglas and father are talking about all this long time?"

Before Nan could answer voices were heard in the hall, and a moment after, through the open window, she saw the curate walk hastily down the garden path. Then the room door opened to admit her father.

"What is it, father"? exclaimed the mother, for the vicar's face spoke of unusual happenings.

Then Nan felt again the burden of her cross, as in happy tones the first love story of the family was told. She saw what happiness the revelation had brought to their hearts. They were both glad, though a natural regret dimmed the mother's eye. They had no thought of excluding Nan from this discussion. Was she not the natural helper of them both?

By-and-by Amy strayed into the room, and, instinctively, father and sister left her alone with the mother, who, in spite of her helplessness, was indeed "mother" with all that sacred name implies. When Douglas came for his answer an ecstatic time followed, during which poor Nan's armour was penetrated by all sorts of arrows.

"My word, Nan," cried Fred, coming in one day, with a hop, skip and a jump. "Such a lark! I ran into the Summer-house just now, and I'll be jiggered if Gray wasn't kissing our Amy! Oo-oo! You should have seen their faces when they saw me."

Fred, boy like, squirmed with delight at the uncommon discovery, and the embarrassment he had caused.

"Nannie," said little Flo, for as of old "little pitchers have long ears," "s'ud'oo 'ike a bid man to kiss 'oo, too?"

"Not while I can have your kisses, darling," said Nan, the sore-hearted.

"It is beautiful to see those two together," said Mrs. Coverdale, next day, next day.

"Nan dear, I'm glad no one has come yet to waken your heart's love, for I couldn't spare you.

There was sweet and bitter strangely mingled for Nan in that little speech.

But Amy's bed-time confidences were hardest of all to bear, for Nan had filled the place of confident too long to lose it now. It was rather bitter to hear the winsome girlish voice say, "Dear old Nan, I expect, since you've never been in love, you can't enter into it all, and that I'm silly to so idealize Douglas, but you'll understand some day."

Perhaps, though, the bitterest moment was when she submitted to receive "a brother's kiss" from Douglas, "for I feel as if you had always been my sister; I have never had one, you know, Nan. I may call you 'Nan' now, may I not?"

He felt the unresponsiveness of Nan's somewhat abrupt reply, "Don't you think you'd better wait a bit, and take us 'on approval' first, before adopting the family in this wholesale fashion?"

It was a heartless little joke, and Nan went away pained by the puzzled look in the eyes she loved, but she couldn't help it, really, for she was but human, and the Valley of Humiliation is hard to tread.

The time of preparation for the wedding sped gaily on, for there was little to wait for. The offer of a comfortable living had given Douglas the right to ask for his bride and it was decided that the wedding should take place in the following Spring.

It was a hard time for Nan, and only the quiet hours she snatched from the busy days to spend with Aunt Dorothea kept her calm and steady.

They did not have another long talk, for some subjects do not bear too free a discussion, but many a word of comfort or counsel, indirectly given, did Nan carry away with her from that quiet home. Besides, the sense of relaxation which came with the presence of the only one who knew what she was bearing, was very sweet to her.

And so, at last, the wedding day came, and all the village was gay. The mother's quiet kiss was given from her couch of suffering, and Nan determined not to spoil their happiness, or betray her secret, watched the ceremony, kissed the dear little bride, played hostess to the guests, and altogether was the life of the party.

But that night her pillow was wet with bitter tears. No one witnessed that "giving way" and only Aunt Dorothea guessed that in the silence of the night, a girl's heart was nigh unto breaking. Truly "every heart knoweth its own bitterness."

There is a happy sequel to my little tale, else would I not have told it, for the world is full of sadness.

The wedding day closed the page of Nan's life, for was not Douglas Amy's husband now? Nan bravely took up the battle of life, and found plenty of active service.

What a comfort it was in after years to know that she had been the stay and support of her mother's last days. That she had been able to watch over, and see safely into manhood and womanhood the children left by that mother to her care. That, when Fred got into trouble through sowing too plentiful a crop of wild oats, she was the means of extricating him, at what sacrifice only herself knew.

And then, one day, when she had thought for a long time that she was too old for "romancing," how surprised she was to find that the legend about Time having such power to heal was, after all, quite true, for did not her heart thrill with pleasure when she became aware that Francis Gordon fought delight in her company?

How young she began to feel again! How she blushed to find herself one day actually studying her wrinkles in the mirror!

Francis Gordon was a well-known author, and the son of an old friend of her father's. He had come down to Ingleton for a quiet rest. Why had he chosen Ingleton? Nan learned the secret one glorious moonlight evening in the old garden.

"For years your father's letters have been permeated with the name 'Nan,'" said he. "Some time ago, when Flo's engagement was announced, he wrote my father, 'So now, dear Nan, after all her sacrifice and devotion is left alone with her old father; she will not have me, but I feel it is very lonely for her.' When I read that, dear (for the Ingleton letters were always passed on to me), I realized afresh how I wanted you. All these years I have been so interested in those references to you. I had an idea that you'd tire of it all in time, and strike out for yourself some day, for in the old times I know you mapped out a very different life for yourself. I remember the flash in your eye as you spoke of the future. But you kept true to your trust, and instinctively I admired you for it, and when that letter came, then a deeper current was touched, and I came to Ingleton to find you. I know I am not young, but because my love is the growth of years, will you not believe it all the more true and steady, Nan?"

That was a glorious evening, and Nan had a rapture all to herself in the silent night. Now she had another to minister to, and—ah, beautiful, fresh experience—someone to return the ministry. What a comfort to have a strong, firm, human friend to lean on.

One more glimpse.

Two little ones are playing in the old garden. The dear old vicar, white-haired now, and growing very old, watches them tenderly. The little girl has Nan's faithful eye; the boy, the pride of his grandfather's heart, is "daddy's boy."

From the window where Nan watched Douglas and Amy with such pain—how far distant it all seems now!—"Daddy" raises his eyes from his writing, to exchange loving glances with the wife he loves so well.

Every week the children pay a loving visit to the grave of Aunt Dorothea in the old churchyard. The last time they went little Frank spelt out the words on the stone which marks the spot.

"Why did you choose that, mother" he asked, in his old-fashioned way. But for answer the mothed only clasped closer the hands of herself and tiny Dorothea, and in her eyes was the far-distant expression which told that for a few minutes her heart was with "dead days beyond recall."—London S. S. Times.

The Warmth of a Snow House.

Usually our snow igloos allowed each man from eighteen to twenty inches space in which to lie down, and just room enough to stretch his legs well. With our sleeping bags they were entirely comfortable, no matter what the weather outside. The snow is porous enough to admit of air circulation, but even a gale of wind without would not affect the temperature within. It is claimed by the natives that when the wind blows, a snow house is warmer than in a period of still cold. I could see no difference. A new snow igloo is, however, more comfortable than one that has been used, for newly cut snow blocks are more porous. In one that has been used there is always a crust of ice on the interior which prevents a proper circulation of air.—Dillon Wallace, in Outing.

Back On the Farm.

"I lost this dime when I was a boy," said the penurious millionaire, "Queer, eh, that I should find it again after all these years?"

"Not at all," responded the sarcastic friend. "If you'll poke among those dead leaves I should think you might find six or eight cents accumulated interest."—Courier Journal.

Japanese Small Trees.

Our indebtedness to Japan is augmented by the remarkable chestnut that hails from there. It is more dwarf than our native species, and bears abundantly when only a few years old. Aside from its usefulness as a nut tree, it is quite ornamental, and should be more generally planted.—Home Magazine.

The Cape Government railways consume large quantities of lard oil and buy it under requested bids for 15,000 gallons at a time.

SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT

It is estimated, says the American machinist, that 100 pounds of alcohol can be made from one ton of domestic refuse. In a good motor car this quantity of alcohol would develop 100 horsepower hours.—Engineer.

"Raise a drop of water to the size of the earth and raise an atom in the same proportion, and the atom will then be in some place between the size of a marble and a cricket ball." Thus said Lord Kelvin, in trying to explain to the inerudite world how little are things atomic.

Paper bricks are used in Berlin for paving; many telegraph poles are now made of rolled sheets of paper; paper coffins are used in some places. Some straw hats, into which enters not an atom of straw, consist of narrow paper strips dyed yellow; artificial sponges can be made of paper pulp.

According to a contemporary, a small piece of good emery cloth is all the material necessary to frost an incandescent lamp quickly, but effectively. Rub the cloth over the entire lamp with a circular motion. Rubbing up and down will not produce the best results. About fifteen minutes' work will produce a very good frosting on an ordinary globe.—Engineer.

Professor Berg, in Buenos Ayres, reports that he has discovered a spider which practises fishing at times. In shallow places it spins between stones a two-winged, conical net, on which it runs in the water and captures small fish, tadpoles, etc. That it understands its work well is shown by the numerous shrivelled skins of little creatures that lie about in the web net.

Among the advancements made during the past year in British commercial undertakings in Venezuela, the Central Railway has slightly extended its system and electricity has been partly substituted for steam. The railway to El Valle, near Caracas, in which British interests are involved, has also adopted electric power, and British engineers are at present commencing the electrification of the Caracas tramway system.—Engineer.

Tantalum has been hammered into sheets which are extremely hard. Sir William Crookes, F. R. S., states that a hole had to be bored through a plate of this metal and a diamond drill was used, revolving at the rate of 5000 revolutions per minute. This whirling force was continued ceaselessly for three days and nights, when it was found that only a small depression 0.25 millimetre deep had been drilled, and it was a moot point which had suffered the more damage—the diamond or the tantalum.

A Moving Lake.

There are several "floating" islands in existence well known to scientists, but the only "wandering" lake we ever heard of is Lake Nor, in the Gobi desert, in Asia, which phenomenon was recently accounted for by the fact that Tarim river, entering the lake from the west, brings down during the period of high water late in summer a great quantity of salt, which has the effect of driving the lake, lying on the level floor of the desert, toward the southeast. But the summer wind, drifting the surface sand and darkening the heavens with dust, blows generally from the northeast, and it, too, tends to drive the lake before it. The combined effect of the urging by the wind and the river is to force the lake southward.—Marine Journal.

Wasting Time.

A sophisticated mother who felt responsible for the future of her daughters, said to one of them:

"Anna, what did young Mr. Jones say to you last night when he was buttoning your glove? I saw he was slightly excited."

"Why," answered Anna, "he said that the person who made a glove so hard to button as that deserved to be killed."

"My dear," retorted her mother, impressively, "don't waste any more of your time on young Mr. Jones."—Philadelphia Ledger.

In Coils of a Python.

Mr. Cocklin, walking in thick grass near the Marico River, Bechuanaland, was thrown to the ground by a fourteen foot python, which coiled around his legs, and then tried to drag him to a tree near by, so that, by coiling its tail around the trunk, it might proceed to crush him to death.

When within two yards of the tree, Mr. Cocklin got a hand free and shot the snake, which was so heavy that it needed three men to lift it.—East London Dispatch.

The consumption of foreign opium has increased in all provinces except Kiang-si and Che-kiang.